



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: January 11, 2023

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: John Aslanian, Beth Benedikt, Bill Copithorne (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Tycho Nightingale, James Stubbe, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Scott Smith and Corey Rateau (APD).

Members of Public in Attendance: Paul Schlichtman and Joseph Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled "Governor Charles Baker's 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law". The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of December 14, 2022 Meeting Notes.

Minutes for the Meeting of December 14, 2022 were approved.

C. Update on Membership

TAC has one at-large position open.

D. Correspondence sent/received between December 10 and January 6, 2022.

1. **"Concerns of Speeding on Highland Avenue,"** Letter from the Select Board to TAC, 12/22/22.

A Town resident emailed the Select Board concerning high vehicle speeds and lack of traffic enforcement on Highland Ave. Working Group on Crosswalk at Highland Avenue and High Haith Road was formed in December, which also will examine speeds.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

There were no public comments.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Bill Copithorne updated TAC that there are no active projects at this time and planning for 2023 is underway. DPW is aiming to complete the Grove St DPW Building for it to open in March, 2023.

MassDOT updated its guidelines on school zones and posted a grant to award up to 50 towns combination speed feedback and speed limit sign assemblies for school zones to support one school zone area. Wayne Chouinard is preparing an application due January 19 to install speed feedback signs on River St.

DPW Director is seeking a consistent process throughout the Town for public engagements regarding roadway concept designs. Laura Swan and Jeff Maxtutis mentioned that TAC has been used for public meetings in the past to receive public comments. Huntington Rd design concept by DPW will be discussed at a future TAC Meeting and could be used as a forum for public comments.

B. There was no update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

C. There was no update from the Police Department (APD).

4. Vote: Summer St/ Victoria Rd

Jim Stubbe presented a draft Memo on short-term recommendations for the crosswalk at Summer St and Victoria Rd, where pedestrians have difficulty seeing vehicles and drivers have difficulty seeing pedestrians. In the short-term: install RRFB and advance warning beacon to enhance visibility of pedestrians to drivers; trim tree branches; paint advance yield lines; expand no parking zones and add flex posts/bollards to daylight crosswalk; install pedestrian flags.

Jeff Maxtutis asked how many parking spots on Summer St will be lost as a result of the recommendations. Jim Stubbe responded that four parking spots

total will be lost (three on the eastbound side and one on the westbound side). Drivers will find parking on the neighborhood streets.

In response to questions and comments from Jeff Maxtutis and Bill Copithorne, Jim Stubbe responded that flex posts will be needed as paint is not enough to keep the no parking zone free of automobiles. If the flex posts are removed in the winter, it is probably not a problem as the fields are not used in the winter.

Len Diggins inquired about the costs of RRFBs. Jeff Maxtutis responded that a standard set is approximately \$30,000 for a pair without an advanced warning beacon. In response to a question from Laura Swan, Bill Copithorne said that a solar RRFB can be moved/relocated if the intersection is redesigned. He added that he discussed the speed limit along Summer St with Corey Rateau of APD. They verified the speeds from the Lexington Town border and Mystic St. Missing signs will be replaced to what has been approved.

Motion to send the “Recommended Summer St/ Victoria Rd Improvements” to the Select Board was approved unanimously by TAC.

5. Discussion: New State Guidelines

A. School Zones have been expanded include high school. (Previously, School Zones were permitted only for K – 8 schools.) School zones may also be posted for locations where students are expected to cross to get to/from school. Jeff Maxtutis recommended that TAC look at the exact wording for School Zone requirements.

B. “An Act to Reduce Traffic Fatalities” is now law, which defines “Vulnerable Road Users” (people walking and biking; roadside workers; people using wheelchairs, scooters, skateboards, roller skates, etc.); requires “safe passing distance” of 4 feet; requires state-contracted trucks to-be equipped with safety side-guards, mirrors, and backup cameras to reduce fatalities of people walking and biking; rear red-light requirement for bicycles; and more.

Regarding the rear red-light requirement for bicycles, John Aslanian said that MassBike is seeking to expand the light brigade, which provides free bicycle lights to cyclists. Laura Swan responded that ABAC probably has ideas on this and should be engaged.

Jeff Maxtutis added that the 2023 Strategic Highway Safety Plan for Massachusetts was released. This document is worth looking at for TAC.

6. Thompson School

River St speed feedback sign application to MassDOT to-be submitted by DPW. The Working Group is considering a 20-mph school zone and speed feedback sign on River St at University Rd.

7. Update: Gibbs School/ Rawson Rd

No update from December. John Aslanian and Scott Smith will merge their observations and reports for a recommendation to TAC. In response to a question from John Aslanian, Bill Copithorne said that Broadway may be repaved in the next year or so. A water line will be changed on Broadway this year; the road surface will be restored the following year unless gas utilities will be changed.

John Aslanian recommended that a school zone be designated for the crossing with the existing Traffic Supervisor at Broadway and another school zone at the crossing of Bates Rd and Raleigh St. Laura Swan added that TAC voted for adding pedestrian flags to Bates and Raleigh in 2019. John Aslanian continued that a pedestrian flags container is missing and the flags need to-be replenished. He and Jeff Maxtutis will coordinate on installing a replacement container and adding pedestrian flags.

Laura Swan will talk to the Traffic Supervisor at Mass Ave and Foster St to discuss whether a school zone should be considered for that crossing.

8. Update: AHS

TAC will evaluate the change in the law expanding the use of school zones to high schools in conjunction with the new high school building design. Where, if any, should school zones be added (e.g., Mass Ave, Mill St, Grove St)?

The high school is different than other schools as it is used for many different purposes and is more active throughout the year. TAC will need to evaluate and consider how to implement school zones with input from Corey Rateau of APD.

Paul Schlichtman added that AHS uses an “open campus model” throughout the school day, and students walk into Town during school hours.

9. Update: Eastern Ave

Robbins Farm Park is located across from Brackett School and is a destination to where people drive. The Working Group observed two older signs of “school zone 20 mph when flashing” on Fayette St and Eastern Ave. The one on Fayette St was working; the one on Eastern Ave was not. Laura Swan added that the

non-functioning flashing light might lead drivers to think that it is not 20 mph at the time.

There is also a time-limited do not enter sign to limit unloading children on Eastern Ave. The Working Group will consider a 20 mph Safety Zone for Eastern Ave.

Jeff Maxtutis added that school arrival was busy, but well managed. He was not sure why Fayette St was made a safety zone given its location and short length. Rather than a flashing sign, TAC should recommend a change to a static sign.

10. Update: Downing Square Signage

Melissa Laube updated that the Working Group has exchanged ideas on signage and will continue its conversation on the size and location of possible signage.

11. Discussion: Crosswalk safety guidelines working group

Laura Swan said that TAC is seeing many requests to upgrade crosswalks. TAC should consider creating a standard to improve crosswalk safety (for example, the use of double-sided signs and retroreflective poles), and develop evaluation criteria for installing an RRFB.

For the Lowell St RRFB, Jeff Maxtutis noted the consideration of documented speeding and high volume of vehicles along an area where people would be crossing to access the Reservoir. Many plans were considered by TAC and DPW, and the RRFB was a good option.

Jim Stubbe asked whether the guidelines would factor in the costs of changes. Jeff Maxtutis responded that the Town is working on revising its Complete Streets Prioritization Plan to identify improvements at specific locations throughout the Town. The Prioritization Plan includes cost estimates. After updating the Prioritization Plan, it will be eligible for up to \$500,000 grant from MassDOT.

A Working Group comprised of Beth Benedikt, Jim Stubbe, and Shoji Takahashi formed.

12. Discussion: Following up on recommendations

Shoji Takahashi discussed the need for following up on the status of TAC recommendations to the Select Board. Jeff Maxtutis added that TAC is an advisory committee to the Select Board and does not control funding or implementation. Most recommendations are directed to DPW and some to APD.

Paul Schlichtman asked about the status of Chestnut St Improvements, noting that the funding will need to-be expended this year. He requested that it be added to the TAC Meeting Agenda for February as an Update item.

Len Diggins responded that he will ask the Town Manager about the Chestnut St project. He inquired about why the parking spot across from Town Hall has not been removed as per the TAC Recommendation to the Select Board.

Bill Copithorne said that the request from the Select Board goes to the DPW Operations Manager. The Highway Division is then tasked with removal of the parking spot. At this time, he does not know the status of the removal.

Laura added that the Transportation Planner (DPCD) is vacant at this time.

Beth Benedikt recommended a spreadsheet on projects with a running list to see actions and progress. Laura Swan will share an internal project list at the next meeting. At present, the internal project list does not include the status of implementation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.